



**TIMOTHEUS MANLOVE** *Med. licentiatus*  
*Divini animi nuncius, et interpres non ineligans*  
*Immortalitatis animæ non ita pridem vindex*

*Jam conscius ~*

*August 3: Anno Domini 1699.*

*Ætat vero: 57 ~*

*Præmature fato cessit. ~*



*M. Pander. Guck. Sculpsit.*

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THE  
COMFORTS  
OF  
Divine Love.

Preach'd upon the Occasion of  
the much Lamented

DEATH

Of the Reverend

Mr. *Timothy Manlove.*

With His Character, Done by  
another Hand.

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*A Short Character of Mr.  
Timothy Manlove.*

**H**E was a Man of a fine Com-  
plexion, and comely Ap-  
pearance: Of pregnant Parts, and a  
ready Wit, which made his Con-  
versation very pleasant, and in-  
gaging.

He had a clear Head, and an  
admirable Capacity, and Skill to  
digest things in their proper, ex-  
actest Order. His Judgment was  
correct, and solid; his Memory  
strong, and tenacious; his Inven-  
tion so fruitful and ready, as al-  
ways to furnish him with a copi-  
ousness of Words to express him-  
self by; and his Expressions were  
full and well Chosen. He

### *A Short Character of*

He was considerable in his Learning, which he was improving in daily.

Being designed for a Physician before he studied Divinity, he had attained to a great Skill in the Niceties of that Art, and practised it with Ease, as well as Success.

He was every way qualified as a Divine. He had all the Accomplishments of a Preacher, and the Graces of Pulpit-Oratory: An excellent Mien, a free Elocution, an unaffected Gravity, and a becoming Seriousness; all which set off what he delivered with very great Ornament.

His Voice was clear, and regular; strong and lively, and exactly modell'd into a sweet harmonious Pronunciation: And as he had

*Dr. Manlove.*

had the Voice of a Divine Charmer, so he charmed wisely. He did not amuse his Hearers with a Train of Pompous Words, but edify'd them with plain, practical Discourses, most suitable to the Noble Simplicity of the Gospel.

He had a great Sense of Religion upon his Mind, and especially a composed, reverent, and heavenly Deportment in Prayer; in which his very Look, as well as Expressions, did excite to the most serious Devotion.

There never seemed to be a cloud, either upon his Thoughts, or Affections, in his Publick Exercises; He had flame and vigour to bear him out to the Last, and he rather chose to leave off with Affection, than to proceed with flatness.

The

*A Short Character, &c.*

The Last Day he appeared in Publick, he was observed in Prayer to have the most profound Thoughts, and exalted Expressions of the Divine Attributes; and in his Last Sermon, with the most affectionate sacred Eloquence, he displayed the Happiness of Heaven. Preaching (from Heb. 2. 2.) upon the Doctrine of the Great Salvation that Christ came to declare to the World, which within a few Days after, he left his mournful Hearers to apply.

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TO THE  
READER.

**T**HE following Discourse was Preached without the least Thought of offering it to Publick View: And yet I was perswaded to yield to the Publication of it, to prevent the Printing of more imperfect Notes.

The Excellency of the Subject sets it above all the supposed Ornaments of the Finery of Words or Rhetorick: The great thing that I minded in the Preaching it, was only to Represent it in plain Intelligible Words. To have attempted any thing more, would have been a wrong to the Matter, which hath so great a Lustre in it self, that it needs to borrow nothing from Art. And if any thing of that had been offered, it would have had no better Success, then the laying the Dawbery of Paint upon a Resplendent Diamond, which would

## To the Reader.

cloud and darken its Refulgent Brightness.

Now Reader, since thou hast it in thy Hand, do not seek for that which was never intended Thee, but consider seriously the Matter, and work it upon thy Heart, till thou be rooted and grounded in a deep Sense of Gods Love, that so thou mayest be filled with Love to Him. This is a Subject worthy of thy Study, and hath in it such admirable Variety, as will make it always Pleasant without Weariness, and will also furnish Thee with a Cordial in thy deepest Spiritual Distresses. That this little Discourse may be thus useful to Thee, is the Earnest Prayer of

The unfeigned Desirer

of thy

Spiritual Happiness,

R. Gilpin.

Books

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# SERMON I.

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ROM. VIII. 35, 36, 37, 38, 39.

*Who shall separate us from the Love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?*

*(As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the Day long; we are accounted as Sheep for the slaughter.)*

*Nay in all things we are more than Conquerors, through him that loved us.*

*For I am perswaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,*

*Nor heighth, nor depth, nor any other Creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

**M**Y last Discourses to you, were an Explication of that great Command and Counsel of  
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2 *A Sermon upon the Death of*  
our Blessed Lord Jesus; *Of striving to*  
*enter in at the strait Gate.* In my Di-  
rections to you for your regular pursuit  
of this important Charge, among other  
things I recommended to you the Apo-  
stle Paul's Prescription, Gal. 5. 16. *Walk*  
*in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the*  
*Lust of the Flesh.*

It was my Purpose at this Time to  
have made a further Progress in that  
Matter, but having received an Intima-  
tion, that my dear Brother and Fellow-  
Labourer now Deceased; had found  
such Comfort in his Meditations on this  
Scripture in his Prospect of Death, that  
he expressed his Desires, that his Fun-  
eral Sermon might be upon this Text.  
His pious Desire (that others might be  
comforted with the Comfort wherewith  
he was comforted of God) prevailed  
with me (though upon a short Warn-  
ing) to turn my Thoughts to this Scrip-  
ture, and the rather, because (your  
Hearts being softened by this mournful  
Providence) the Truth contained in  
this Text might possibly make the deep-  
er Impression upon you.

I cannot let you into the full Under-  
standing

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standing of the Apostles Triumphant Conclusion, except I lead you to the first Rise and Head of it. In *ver. 1.* He give us the Consequence of his former Doctrine, he had largely asserted and proved in the foregoing Chapters, *That we are justified by Grace, and freed from the Law.* From these Truths he lays down this comfortable Conclusion as most evident and certain. *There is therefore now no Condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.* This Conclusion is full: *No Condemnation*, neither by God, nor Law, nor Conscience; and it is universally true to *all that are in Christ.*

But because this Conclusion is the Corner-stone, and must sustain the weight of all the superstructure, he first limits it to those *that are in Christ*, and explains what he means by giving them their true Character. *They walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit.*

Next he proves his Assertion, by its Parts. 1. That there is no Condemnation to such. This he argues in the four following Verses. His Argument is this, the condemning Law is superse-

B 2

ded,

4 *A Sermon upon the Death of*  
ded, he grants there was a Covenant  
of Works, which being broken, was to  
us a Law of Sin and Death: It charged  
us with Sin, and that dueness of the  
Curse. But then he shows there is ano-  
ther Law (which he calls a *Law of the*  
*Spirit of Life*) that is a Covenant of  
Grace, promising Life, as also the Affi-  
stance of the Spirit: And this Law be-  
ing a remedying Law sets us free from  
the former.

2. The Limitation and Character of  
the Persons to whom this Freedom is li-  
mited, he proves and explains in the  
following Verses, shewing that it must  
be the natural Genius and Temper of  
those that are in Christ, to mind the  
things of the Spirit; as those *that are of*  
*the Flesh* will naturally mind the  
*things of the Flesh*, ver. 5.

From the great Love of God, and the  
sure Foundation of it, he proceeds to  
make some Inferences, as 1. That then  
we are Debtors to God in point of Ho-  
liness, ver. 12. and in ver. 31. He heaps  
up many Inferences of Consolation.

1. That if God be thus engaged to be  
for us as our Father and Protector,  
not

none can be against us to our hurt.

2. He infers, that seeing God hath given us Christ, we may expect what ever shall be necessary for the Compleatment of our Happiness.

3. He infers, that the malicious or erroneous Accusations of Men, are of no Consideration, *ver. 33. Who shall lay any thing to the Charge of Gods Elect?* Because, 1. There is no Tribunal but Gods, and if he acquit us, 'tis no matter who Condemns us. 2. Christ did all his Work of Redemption compleatly, *ver. 34. Not only Dying, but Rising again to make Intercession for us.*

4. Hence he infers in a Triumphant Assurance, the impossibility of our Separation from the Love of God, *ver. 35. Who shall separate us from the Love of God?* &c. That the Strength of this Inference may more fully appear, I shall distinctly Note these Particulars.

1. The Subject spoken of, *The Love of God.* Whether it be God's Love to us, or our Love to God is questioned; some think both are intended, and that it is impossible that it should fail on either Part. But surely Gods Love to us

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is chiefly intended: For on our part in it self it's too possible, that under such Temptations our Love and Faith might fail. But the impossibility ariseth from God's Will: He will not suffer our Love to fail. So that ultimately the not failing of our Love, is resolved into Gods *unchangeable Love*. And beside the Expressions of the last Verse of this Chapter. *The Love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*, doth clearly Point at Gods Love to us.

2. The next thing asserted is our *Non-Separation* from this Love. The Word in the Greek *χωρισμ* is the same Word that is used, *Mat. 19. 6.* with respect to the *Jewish Divorces*. So that the meaning is, Though Gods Love may sometime be hidden, yet there will never be a Divorce or Eternal Separation.

3. The *Impossibility* of this Separation appears in this Discourse two Ways.

1. By an Enumeration of those things that might seem possible to effect a Separation, but cannot; these the Apostle ranges into Two Classes. 1. No kind or degrees of *Sufferings*. Here he reckons up several hard things. *Shall tribulation,*

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lation, distress, &c? 2. No outward Powers. Neither fear of Death, nor hope of Life, nor Devils, nor persecuting Rulers, nor height of Advancement, nor depth of Ignominy and Reproaches; and least any thing else should be pretended, he adds, *nor any other Creature, as an, &c. including all.*

2. The Impossibility of this Separation is imply'd in his manner of speaking by continued Interrogation, *Who shall separate?* As also by his Assurance, *I am persuaded*; πείθομαι though it sometime signifie no more than a Moral Persuasion, yet here it signifies *undoubted Assurance*, like the Phrase in Rom. 14. 14. and 2 Tim. 2. 12. *I know and am persuaded.*

The Doctrine I shall now draw out of these Words, is this;

*The Consideration of the Infiniteness and Unchangeableness of God's Love, is sufficient to guard our Hearts from all Affrightments, that may arise from all that may befall us in this World.*

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To make way for the Application of this Truth, I shall explain and prove these Three Things.

I. That God's Love to Elect Believers is *Infinite*.

II. That this Love of God is *Unchangeable*.

III. That the Consideration of Gods Infinite and Unchangeable Love, is a sweet Cordial in all Distresses, and a Guard against all Affrightments of Fear, to all that are in Christ.

I. That God's Love to Elect Believers is *Infinite*, admirably Great. All Gods Attributes, even those that are called *Communicable* (such as his Power, Wisdom, Justice, Love, &c.) are in God infinitely, eternally, and unchangeably. His Love therefore in Scripture is crowned with the Epithite [Great] *His great Love wherewith he loved us*, Eph. 2. 4. His Love, his Power, his Understanding are commensurate with his Infinite Greatness. Thus David argues, *Psalm 147. 5. Great is our Lord, and of great Power: his Understanding is Infinite.*

But that we might have a more easie  
Satis-



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Satisfaction and Apprehension of the Love of God, the Scripture commends the greatness of Gods Love to us, under Three Considerations.

The First is by comparing the wonderful Greatness of God, with the Object of his Love. This Consideration Holy *David* insists on, *Psalms 113. 4, 5.* *The Lord is high above all Nations, and his Glory above the Heavens: Who is like unto the Lord our God, who dwelleth on High?* That is, He is so great, that his merciful regard of the highest created Beings, *Things in Heaven*, much more of the lower World, *Things on Earth*, is so far below his glorious Greatness, that it is a kind of abasement to him to behold them, *ver. 6.* *He humbleth himself, to behold the Things that are in Heaven, and in the Earth.* He humbleth himself to behold these things that are so far below him. That would be a strange unaccountable Love, that should make a great Prince set his Heart upon a Worm or Fly, to regard, feed and watch over it; and we are as mean if compared to an Infinite God. *The Nations are as the drop of a Bucket, or the*

10 *A Sermon upon the Death of the small Dust of the Ballance: They are counted to him as nothing, and if any thing can be lower, less than nothing, Isa. 40. 15, 17. The Inhabitants of the Earth, are but as Grasshoppers, ver. 22.*

This Consideration was *David's* Meditation in *Psalms* 8. when his Thoughts were upon the Wing, mounting upward toward the excellent Glory of the Divine Majesty, he almost looseth the sight of Man. *What is Man?* v. 4. At last his Contemplation carries him to an Admiration of Gods Love and Care over so low a Creature. *What is Man?* But oh how great is God's Love in being mindful of him, so as to visit him! Which is further explained by *Job* 7. 17. *What is Man that thou shouldest magnifie him! That thou shouldest set thy Heart upon him! That thou shouldest visit him every Morning!* But if we should place Man in an higher Degree, and consider him as a Servant, yet still Gods Love looseth not its Lustre, because at best we are but *unprofitable Servants*, *Luke* 17. 10. If we should do all that we are commanded, we do but that which was our Duty to do, and which

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we owe to God upon the Right of Creation; yet we merit nothing. God hath no Advantage or Profit by our Service, *Job 22. 2, 3. Can a Man be profitable unto God? What gain is it to him that thou makest thy ways perfect.*

If Man at best be so far below the Desert of God's Love, How great will this Love appear, if we consider Man as sinful! Thus we are become Enemies, not only breakers of his Law, but opposite thereto, and withal were helpless, and could do nothing for our selves. Both these the Apostle takes Notice of, *Rom. 5. 6.* as a transcendant Manifestation of God's Love; and *ver. 8.* God commendeth his Love to us.

2. The Scriptures set forth the greatness of Gods Love, by the great and wonderful Benefits bestowed on us. We usually measure Love by the Fruits of it. The Fruits of Gods Love cannot be numbred; particularly the Promises are so loaden with them, that they are justly called *exceeding Great and Precious Promises*. In the gross, *They are things that pertain unto Life and Godliness*, *2 Pet. 1. 3. All spiritual Blessings*  
in

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*in heavenly Places, Eph. 1. 3. The Blessings of this Life and that which is to come, 1 Tim. 4. 8. All that is within the Circumference of Grace and Glory, Psalm 84. 11.*

3. But above all Gods Love is magnified by the Method, which his Infinite Wisdom pitched upon for the bringing about his Purpose of Love; this was the sending Christ to Die for Sinners. This was such an adorable Mystery of Wisdom and Love, that the Angels desire to look into it. Christ himself speaks of it as transcendant beyond Comparison. *God so loved the World, that he sent his only begotten Son, &c. John 3. 16. and in 1 John 4. 9, 10. The Apostle represents it as the most glorious Publick Manifestation of Love. In this was manifested the Love of God towards us, because that God sent his only Son into the World. Herein is Love, &c.*

II. The second thing that I am to explain and prove, is, That this Love of God is *Unchangeable*. It is frequently called an Everlasting Love, *Jer. 31. 3. I have loved thee with an Everlasting Love. His Mercy endureth for ever.*

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Having loved his own, he loved them unto the end, John 13. 1. And it must needs be so, if it be considered.

1. That Gods Nature is Unchangeable. God asserts it, *Mal. 3. 6. I am the Lord, I change not.* Psalm 102. 25, 26. *The Heavens and the Earth shall perish, but thou shalt endure. Thou art the same, and thy Years shall have no end.* James 1. 17. *With God is no variableness, neither shadow of Turning.*

The Unchangeableness of Gods Nature is evident by the very Light of Reason. All that believe the Existence of God, will yield, that *Dens est ens necessarium & Independens*. God is a necessary and Independant Being. That God is Self-existent is an Original and Fundamental Idea, which we are to have of God. This Monsieur *Abbadie* proves in his *Vindication of the Christian Religion*, Sect. 2. Cap. 2. And from this necessity of his Being, he deduceth his *Immutability*. For if God depend not upon any other Being, nor receive any thing from any other Being, his Essence cannot then be varied. And if his Nature is Unchangeable, his *Will* is also Un-

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Unchangeable. It is true, God doth  
sometime change his Promises and  
Threatnings, but his Purposes he chan-  
geth not. *Mutat Sententiam sed non*  
*Decretum.* Men usually change their  
declared Purposes, because all Men are  
Liers, and so break their Promises; or  
they Promise without due Considerati-  
on, and when any thing happens which  
they foresaw not, they repent. But it  
cannot be thus with God. *My Counsell*  
*shall stand, I have purposed it, I will al-*  
*so do it,* Isa. 49. 10, 11. The Reason  
of this we have in Numb. 23. 19. *God*  
*is not a Man that he should lie, neither the*  
*Son of Man, that he should repent.*

2. That Gods Love is Unchange-  
able will further appear, if we consider  
that his Love is bottomed upon a cer-  
tain Foundation, *His own free Purpose,*  
*and Christs Purchase.* This Reason the  
Apostle doth not obscurely suggest in the  
Text, *None can separate us from Gods*  
*Love,* because it is a Love to us in *Christ*  
*Jesus our Lord.* Had it been built upon the  
sandy Foundation of our Merit, we  
might have feared the failure of it upon  
every miscarriage or failure of Duty.

III. The

III. The Third Thing to be explained is, That the Consideration of Gods Infinite and Unchangeable Love is a sweet Cordial in all Distresses, and a Guard against all Affrightments of Fear to all those that are in Christ. For,

1. Those that are in Christ being *reconciled* and *pardoned*, may be assured, that however God may change his Countenance toward them, yet he will not change his Heart. He may be angry, but Anger and Love are consistent. All Men may be convinced of this. Parents may be angry with their Children, and yet love them. It is true, that Parental Corrections will be grievous to ingenuous Children, they will mourn under them; and thus God's Anger will be an heavy Burden to his Children, as their Complaints and Sorrows do abundantly Witness. Yet God would have us to consider his Love in his Rod, *Heb. 12. 6. Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.* To be without Chastisement is an Evidence, that we are Bastards, and not Sons. God may be angry but he never changeth his Love into hatred.

2. The greatest outward Afflictions are



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are so managed by God, that if we could duely observe his dealings with us, we might perceive his Love intermixed with the Lashes of his Rod. All the while he manifests a fatherly Pity and Compassion. Fury is not in him. He hath a gentle Hand to the weak: He remembers their Mold and Fashion. They have also secret Supports and seasonable Deliverances.

3. All these Distresses are so far from separating his Children from his Love, that as he orders them, they Work together for their good. Their Graces are hereby exercised, encreased, and made bright, as your Vessels are by scouring. So that their Distresses *yield the peaceable Fruits of Righteousness to those that are exercised thereby*, Heb. 12. 11. They are hereby brought into nearer Communion with God; and at last, he lifts up the Light of his Countenance upon them, like clear shining after Rain.

4. It is further evident, that all outward Troubles cannot separate them from the Love of God, because he doth evidently strengthen their Hearts under them,

them, so that they prevail not to draw them off from God. This Argument the Apostle fixeth on a Demonstration of what he had asserted, *In all these things we are more than Conquerors.* It's a glorious Victory to stand in an Evil Day, when Satan hath drawn up all his Forces against us: 'Tis a glorious Victory not only to escape without Loss, but to gain by his Opposition; thus we out-shoot him in his own Bow. And all this, *sine Labore & Sudore*, easily through Divine Assistance.

5. All these Troubles do not so much as render us less Lovely in Gods Eyes. God is not as Man; Men judge often by outward Appearance, Gods Children are often blackened with false Accusations and Reproaches; but God will not judge them according to Men's Misrepresentations. You have a clear instance of it in that Scripture which hath been so much abused. *He hath not beheld Iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel.* The meaning is not, that the Omniscient God doth not see, or that an Holy God cannot be angry at the Transgressions of  
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his People. But thus we are to understand it. *Balaam* was upon a Design of cursing *Israel*, *Balak* would have represented them as a Company of Robbers, that came to destroy and invade a Country that was not their own, but being not able to prevail, he gives this for a Reason, That God would not judge of them as they had represented them, nor deal with them according to their Desires and Condemnation.

6. The Consideration of Gods Love, hath a Power in it to sweeten our greatest Afflictions, and to take out the sting and venom out of the worst of our Troubles. If we have Gods Love, we have more than all the World can give us, it will counter-balance all Troubles, and make up all Losses of outward Comforts.

Having explained these three Things, I shall conclude with some Applicatory Inferences suitable to the present mournful Occasion. As,

1. If the Love of God be such a Cordial and Guard, let it be our great endeavour to get an Interest in this Love. This is the one thing necessary. If any

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any ask, How must this be done? I shall only tell them, they must seek to be in Christ. The first Application of this Love is made in Conversion, though Gods Purpose of loving was before. Yet we were Children of Wrath, till God by Conversion, and the new Birth translate us from the Power of Darknes to the Kingdom of his Dear Son, then and not till then is Gods gracious Purpose brought into Act.

2. Let us adore, admire and meditate upon Gods Infinite Unchangeable Love. And this not only in General, but in a Particular Application of it to our selves, as the Apostle, *Gal. 2, 20. Who loved me, and gave himself for me.*

3. 'Tis most natural to infer from Gods great Love to us, That it is our Duty, and should be our Care, *To walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, Col. 3. 10.*

4. If the Love of God be so great a Cordial and Guard against our Fears, we should make use of it as such, and oppose our Fears by the Consideration of it. This was *David's* Shield and Buckler on all such Occasions, *Psalms*

20 *A Sermon upon the Death of*

23. 4. He resolves against his greatest Fears in a confident Reliance on Gods Love and Presence. *Though I walk through the Valley of the shadow of Death, I will fear no Evil, for thou art with me.* Yea in Troubles that carry the appearance of Gods Chastisements, he is relieved by the Apprehension of Gods Love, *Psalms 49. 5, 15. Wherefore should I fear in the Days of Evil, when the Iniquity of my heels shall compass me about. For God will redeem my Soul from the Power of the Grave.*

5. Let us not mourn as those that have no Hope, for the Death of Godly Persons. They Die in Gods Love and Death is so far from separating them from the Love of God; that it is Gods Porter to open the Door of Eternity to them, and so to give them an immediate entrance into the full Enjoyment of his Love. When Death has done its worst, they that enter into Rest go off with Triumph. *O Death where is thy Sting? O Grave where is thy Victory?*

6. This may be a Caution against the usual Presumptions of Men, who

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are apt to be too bold in interpreting Gods Providences in the Death of his Servants. They are too sawcy and bold with God, when they take upon them to assign a Reason, why God takes any of his Servants out of the World, and so determine what Gods Design is in so doing.

It hath pleased God Almighty, and the All-wise Disposer of all things to make another Breach upon us. 'Tis not long since he took Mr. Pell from us, and now he hath called home Mr. Manlove, both of them excellent Men, worthy Ministers of the Gospel, singularly (both of them) fitted with Abilities for their Work. They were successively my Dear Brethren, and Fellow-Labourers in this Part of Gods Vineyard. It must be acknowledged, that it is a stroke to be lamented; and if we look upon the present Providence, we may have some Cause to fear, that when God is discharging his Servants from his Work, and paying them their Wages, That he may shortly break up his House with us.

Let none rejoyce at it, nor say, *Aha*

22 *A Sermon upon the Death of*  
*so would we have it.* Neither should  
others Despond: *Who knows the end of*  
*the Lord?* 'Tis easie for him to make  
up our loss, if we submissively wait for  
him. If his Love be unchangeable to  
single Persons, we may conclude it will  
be so to faithful Churches. There are  
I hope many of you that hear me, that  
can stand forth and Witness, that you  
have seen his Power and Glory in his  
Sanctuary: You have felt and tasted the  
Power and Goodness of God in your  
Conversion, quickning and Comforting  
in his Ordinances in this Place; And I  
hope, that Christ who delights to walk  
among his Golden Candlesticks, will  
not now separate us from his Love,  
nor remove the Candlestick out of its  
Place.



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# SERMON II.

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ROM. VIII. 35, 36, 37, 38, 39.

*Who shall separate us from the Love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?*

*(As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the Day long; we are accounted as Sheep for the slaughter.)*

*Nay in all things we are more than Conquerors, through him that loved us.*

*For I am perswaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,*

*Nor height, nor depth, nor any other Creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

**T**HIS Scripture I opened to you the Last Day upon a special Occasion, which I then acquainted you

24 *A Sermon upon the Death of*  
withal. That Discourse had the better  
Part of that Entertainment which the  
Apostle *Paul's* had at *Athens*, Acts 17.  
32. I have not heard nor believe that  
any here had such slight Thoughts of  
*Gods Love* to Man, as to mock at the  
Discourse; yet I have met with some  
that desire to *hear again of that Matter.*

I need not repeat what hath been  
spoken. But because the Love of God  
is a noble Subject, and so vastly large,  
that our Thoughts cannot reach it to  
any suitable Comprehension, nor can  
our Tongues express the *Breadth,*  
*Length, Depth and Height* of it, Eph.  
3. 17. So that when we have said all  
we can, there is still Matter for more:  
I shall now add something to what was  
spoken, which was the less because I  
was forced to be short, to give Room  
for the Funeral which waited our At-  
tendance upon it.

All that I shall now add shall be

I. To speak something in General of  
the Love of God.

II. To set before you the wonderful  
Priviledges and Advantages, that flow  
in upon us from the Fountain of Di-  
vine Love. And then,

III. To

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III. To recommend the Contemplation of Gods Love to you, that your Thoughts may be taken up with the Wonders of it.

I. In *General*, the Love of God is not a meer *Quality* in God, but his very *Essence*. *God is Love*, 1 John 4. 8. This Love in God is a necessary result of his Goodness, which is his very *Nature*. There is none *Essentially, Absolutely, and Perfectly Good but God*, Mat. 19. 17. This Goodness God lets forth to all Creatures, yet not with an Equality; but so as might best shew forth his Sovereignty in doing with his own as he pleased: And his Wisdom in adorning the World with a beautiful variety of Creatures, of differing Perfections according to their different Kinds and Uses. Hence it is usual to distinguish the Goodness of God into

First, *A General Goodness* to all Creatures. All that he Created he saw was *very Good*. And ever since he is good to all, and his *Mercy is over all his Works*. *His Mercy is in the Heavens*. Angels share in it, *Psalms 36. 5*. And extends over all the Earth, *He preserveth Man and Beast*, ver. 6.

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Secondly, *A Special Goodness* to Man. Though he be little, if compared with the Infinite Perfections of the glorious God, that it is a Wonder that God *should be mindful of him*, Psalm 8. 4. Much more that *he should magnifie him*, Job 7. 17. Yet is he so exalted above all his Fellow-Creatures of the Inferiour World, that he is made but *a little lower than the Angels*, and *Lord of the Works of his Hands*, ver. 5, 6. of Psalm 8. Nor hath God left himself without a Witness of his singular Cāre and Providence over him, in that he doth good, and gives us Rain and fruitful Seasons, filling our Hearts with Food and Gladness.

Thirdly, *There is a most special Goodness* to his chosen Servants, which David in Contradistinction to the two former calls *Loving Kindness*; *How excellent is thy Loving Kindness*, Psal. 36. 7. This most special Goodness is called *Love*, which being understood in a most special Sense, differs from that common Goodness which God imparts to his Creatures, in that it signifies Gods special Delight and readiness to communicate

municate and unite himself to the Object Loved. Though this Love hath not properly different Degrees in God, for none of his glorious Attributes admit of a more or less, yet the Scriptures give us leave to make a Distinction in Compliance to the weakness of our Understandings. So that usually the Love of God is said to be Threefold.

1. A Love of *Benevolence*, Gods Eternal Good Will; this Christ speaks of *John 3. 16. God so loved the World, &c.* And this is there spoken of, as Antecedent to his giving Christ, and as a Cause of it. This Text is perplexed with Controversie, because of the general Word [the World] which some labour to stretch so as to comprehend every Man. But avoiding the Controversie, we may understand the Text thus, God so pitied lost Mankind, *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, that he would not that all should perish, but that a Community, a World of Elect ones should through Faith in Christ obtain Everlasting Life.

2. A Love of *Beneficence*, which signifies the Acts of Love brought forth in Time

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Time, after we had a Being, in pursu-  
ance of his Eternal Purpose and Good  
Will. Thus Christs Death, our Justifi-  
cation and Sanctification are the Mani-  
festation and Application of his Love,  
and called so, *Eph. 5. 25. Rev. 1. 5.*

3. A Love of *Complacency*, by which  
God rejoyceth over those that are in his  
Way and Method brought home to  
Christ. This is fully expressed in *John*  
*14. 21, 23.* Besides the Love of Bene-  
volence, My Father, and I will mani-  
fest a more intimate Love and kind Fa-  
miliarity.

Though I purposely avoided the ab-  
struse and difficult Questions about Gods  
Love, yet these Distinctions are neces-  
sary for the answering some Objections  
which might arise in your Hearts about  
the Unchangeableness of Gods Love.  
The Love of Complacency and Benefi-  
cence admits of Variations, of less or  
more; being but Manifestations and E-  
manations of Divine Love upon us,  
when yet his Love of Benevolence is the  
same.

II. The next thing I promised, was  
a further account of the *Priviledges* and  
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*Advantages* which accrew to us by the Love of God, which are so great and numerous, that I cannot reckon them up in order to you. I must take up with that of *David*, Psalm 40. 5, 6. *Thy Thoughts to us-ward, cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: If I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbred.*

I will therefore in this Matter closely follow the Footsteps of those two great Apostles, the great Admirers and Preachers of Gods Love. The Apostle *John* in 1 *John* 3. 1. reduces all the Privileges of Love to this one, *That we should be called*, that is, have Power and Right to be, *the Sons of God*, as *John* 1. 12. This if rightly studied, will appear to be so great a Love as cannot be fully expressed, but to be left to Admiration; *Behold what manner of Love the Father hath bestowed upon us!*

The Apostle *Paul* in this Eighth Chapter of the *Romans*, doth as it were Comment upon, and explain that of, 1 *John* 3. in pursuit of that grand Conclusion, *Rom.* 8. 1. *There is therefore now no Condemnation to them which are*  
in



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*in Christ Jesus.* That the Odours of  
this precious Oyntment might be fur-  
ther diffused for the Refreshment of all  
that are in Christ (which he describes  
by the Power and Influence of the Ho-  
ly Spirit over them) he sets himself to  
declare the Priviledges of such, and  
fixeth first upon our Sonship; *ver. 12.*  
As the Apostle *John* did, but he endea-  
vours a more particular Enumeration  
of our Priviledges, yet so that he re-  
duceth them all to this of our being the  
Children of God. The Advantages  
which he insists upon, arising from this  
grand Priviledge, are Three.

*First,* If we are Sons, we partake of  
the *Spirit* of our Father, and this we  
do several Ways;

1. We are *Led* by the Spirit, *ver. 14.*  
Whether we read the Verse backward or  
forward it holds true, *As many as are*  
*led by the Spirit, are the Sons of God.*  
And *as many as are the Sons of God* have  
been, and shall still be *led by the Spirit.*  
Let us take in this Consideration toge-  
ther with that of Sonship; and then  
say, Oh! What manner of Love is this,  
that we who were afar off, both in re-  
spect



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spect of sinful Indisposition and Enmity, should be made so near, as to become Children! That we should be changed in the Spirit of our Mind! That we should by the Spirits leading, Teaching and Influence, be made conformable to the Image of Christ, and so be made Partakers of a Divine Nature, and should have the Spirit (by whom we were wrought up to this very thing) to be our constant Tutor and Guide!

2. By the Spirit another Advantage given, *ver. 15.* The Spirit is to us a *Spirit of Adoption*, that is, a childlike Disposition, to Love God, to depend upon him with a child-like Trust and Confidence, and in an humble boldness and freedom, being made Children; God would not have us to Act under a slavish Principle of Fear, which is a Spirit of Bondage, but by a free and ingenuous Love.

3. The Spirit is also a *Spirit of Witness* and Assurance, *ver. 16.* *The Spirit itself beareth Witness with our Spirit, that we are the Children of God.* It is necessary that Children should know their

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their Father, it conduceth much to  
their Comfort and Government. This  
the Apostle urgeth upon the younger  
Christians, as their Priviledge and Ad-  
vantage, 1 *John* 2. 13. *I write unto you*  
*little Children, because ye have known the*  
*Father.* The Spirit assists the Witness  
of our Conscience, clears our Doubts  
and gives comfortable Satisfaction.  
These Advantages we have by the Spirit,  
and all these are necessarily contained  
in the Priviledge of Sonship.

*Secondly,* Another Advantage by the  
Priviledge of Sonship is noted, *ver. 17.*  
*If Children, then Heirs.* The same Love  
that makes us Children, provides an In-  
heritance for us: This Inheritance the  
Apostle magnifies, 1. As *Glorious and*  
*Great*; so Glorious, that though we  
must suffer as Christ did, before we  
come to the full Possession, yet the Glo-  
ry of that Inheritance is so great, that  
our Sufferings are never to be mentioned  
*ed, nor compared to the Glory that is*  
*be revealed,* *ver. 18.* 2. Because the  
*Certainty* of that Inheritance, adds not a  
small Lustre to the Glory of it. The  
Apostle shews us, that the Children of God

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shall have a full Certainty of it, and  
may live and rejoice in the Constant  
Comfortable Expectation of it.

1. Not only by an Argumentation  
drawn from our present Pressures and  
Afflictions, for so the whole Creation  
maneth and expecteth a Freedom, *ver.*

22. But,

2. We have the Pledge, and Earnest,  
First-Fruits of it already, *ver.* 23.

3. The Spirit helps forward and  
liveneth our Hopes, *We groan within*  
*ourselves*; and to help us further, our  
Hopes are stronger by the Spirits Affi-  
nity in our Prayers.

4. By directing us to the Matter fit  
to be prayed for. *We know not what we*  
*would pray for as we ought*, we are not  
competent Judges of what is fit for us.

5. By exciting our *Desires* to an ear-  
nestness, even *groanings that cannot be*  
*expressed*, which is the Spirits Intercessi-  
on for us, *ver.* 26. So that by our Pray-  
ing, our Hopes are confirmed; our De-  
sires come from himself, he knows and  
answers them, and returneth the Answer  
to our Prayers in inward Strength and

God D Con-

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Consolation, ver. 27. *He that searcheth*  
*the Heart, knoweth what is the Mind of*  
*the Spirit, because he maketh Intercession*  
*for the Saints, according to the Will of*  
*God.*

*Thirdly, Another Advantage of Son-*  
*ship is also mentioned, ver. 28. All*  
*things shall Work together for Good*  
Children expect Good, and not Hurt  
from Parents: So our Sonship assures  
us, that whatever Troubles or Distres-  
ses we may meet with, they shall at last  
by Gods over-ruling Disposol, Work  
out our Advantage. Oh what manner  
of Love is this, that we should be made  
the Children of God! We have therefore  
by the Gift of the Spirit, to lead and  
teach us, until Christ be formed in us  
and as a constant Guide of our Way  
And hereby also we have free access  
to God, and Dependance on him: We  
have also the comfortable Witness  
of our Interest in Divine Love, and Eter-  
nall Happiness in the Enjoyment of  
God: And by the same Spirit we have  
our Taste of Heaven on Earth, rejoic-  
ing in the Hope of the Glory of God  
and in the mean time our Troubles  
come our spiritual Advantage.

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I now take hold on the Opportunity, which these Considerations offer me to urge you to a serious Contemplation of Gods Love to us. Let your Thoughts be taken up with the Wonders of Divine Love.

1. You will find that all the Saints that have exercised their Thoughts upon this Subject, have run themselves in Wonder; and when they have thought and spoken all they could, they have left the Rest to silent Admiration. This you may observe in our blessed Apostle in *ver. 31. of this eighth Chapter. What shall we then say to these Things?* It is not only an uncontrollable Certainty that he means, who can contradict or say ought against these things? But an Expression of the unaccountable vastness of the Matter, which exceeded his Thoughts and Utterance. What Tongue, what Words fully declare his Love?

The Apostle *John* expresseth a transgression of Admiration in these Words, *John 3. 1. Behold what manner of Love God the Father hath bestowed upon us!* There is nothing among Men that can be liken-

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ed unto it; if that Priviledge and the Persons upon whom it is bestowed be considered. For *Us*, who were Rebels and Enemies in our Minds by wicked Works, to be made *Sons*! Is this the manner of Men? *Saul* was convinced of *Dauids* great Love to him by this Consideration, 1 Sam. 24. 19. *If a Man find his Enemy, will he let him go well away?* It is not usual for Men so to do; but much less usual is it for Men to heap kindneses upon Enemies. God's Love to us, far exceeds all that can be found among Men. *David* in Psalm 36. finds some dark Resemblances whereby to express the extent of Gods Mercy and Faithfulness. They are as high as Heaven, ver. 5. *Thy Mercy is in the Heavens; and thy Faithfulness reacheth unto the Clouds.* ver. 6. *Thy Righteousness is like the great Mountains; thy Judgments are a great Deep.* But when he comes to speak of Love, he finds it above Comparison, and speaks of it as an unexpressible Excellency, ver. 7. *How excellent is thy Loving Kindness, O God!*

2. Least some should imagine that such Expressions of Admiration, are only the high flights of some peculiar Favourites, and that Christians of the common Rank are not much concerned herein, because it may seem to be above their reach; I shall in a few plain Interrogations suggest to you some Things in Gods Love, which will appear to be wonderful to all.

First, Who can tell the *First Spring* of Love in God? What Extrinsical Motive could possibly have a bending Influence upon the Divine Will? *Who hath been his Counsellor?* Or who could oblige him by any Gift? *Rom. 11. 34.*

Secondly, Who can give an Account of *Discriminating Love*? Why was *Jacob* loved, and not *Esau*? The Apostle resolves it, *Rom. 11. 33. O the depth of the Riches, both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God!* Is it not a wonder that God should provide a Saviour for fallen Man, and none for fallen Angels, and yet they were more noble Creatures.

Thirdly, Who can bound the *Extent* of Divine Love? None but he that



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hath set bounds to the Ocean, which  
it shall not pass. Who knows the Ex-  
tent of it, 1. As to *Persons*, that shall  
be saved by it? How great will be the  
General Assembly and Church of the  
First-born? The Rays of the Sun are  
not scattered by visiting a multitude of  
Objects, no more is Gods Love lessen-  
ed by having Mercy upon many.  
2. Who can bound the Love of God,  
as to the *Conditions* of those that shall  
be saved. God doth not fix his choice  
to the Wise, Great or Noble Persons,  
*I Cor. 1. 26. Not many Wise Men after*  
*the Flesh, not many Mighty, not many*  
*Noble are called.* But being no Respe-  
cter of Persons, he gives his Love to  
the most unlikely, and contrarily qua-  
lified, sometimes to the greatest of Sin-  
ners, to Persecuters: Thus *Paul* reckons  
himself a *Pattern to them which should*  
*afterward believe, I Tim. 1. 16.*

*Fourthly*, Who can reckon up all the  
several *Benefits* of Love? Adoption,  
Justification, Sanctification, and Eter-  
nal Life, are frequently mentioned:  
But who can number his other Thoughts  
of Love to us-ward? *Psalms 139. 17.*



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*How Great is the Sum of them ! If I should count them, they are more in number than the Sand.* Who can give an account of his Gracious Visits, his Tokens of Love, his particular answers of Prayers, his secret Strengthenings and Revivings ? They that have endeavoured to compass and describe the whole Globe of Divine Love, must leave vast spaces upon which they must write, *Terra Incognita.*

*Fifthly,* Who can give a true Estimate of Gods Love ? It far surpasseth all outward Comforts. Life, and the Contentments of it, is the chief of outward Comforts. But *Gods Loving Kindness is better than Life,* Psalm 63. 3. It is above what our Senses can inform us of, 1 Cor. 2. 9. *Eye hath not seen, Ear hath not heard, neither hath entered into the Heart of Man, the things that God hath prepared for them that Love him.* What we have received already of the first Fruits of this Love, will shew that what is to come is a great Felicity. But we cannot from all that know fully what those Pleasures are that are at Gods right Hand for evermore, 1 John

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3. 2. *It doth not yet appear what we shall be.*

3. I shall add, That though we cannot fully comprehend what is the *Breadth*, and *Length*, and *Depth*, and *Height* of his Love which *passeth Knowledge*, Eph. 3. 18. Yet it is the *Duty*, and will be still the *Advantage* of all Saints to endeavour to possess their Hearts deeply with a rooted and grounded Sense of Gods Love: This is the Apostle's Prayer for the *Ephesians*, and the Duty of all, *That they may be able to comprehend with all Saints*, ver. 18.

That it is our Duty will appear by the Advantages, which will follow upon our endeavour: Some of the chief I shall enumerate. As,

*First*, The Sense of Gods Love will make us *Thankful*. Thankfulness is a natural return to great and undeserved Favours: The Heart being filled with this fulness of Gods Love, will find it self straitened till it give it self ease by venting it self in Praise, *Psalm 116. 12. What shall I render unto the Lord for all his Benefit, towards me?*

*Secondly,*

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*Secondly*, It will make us *Humble*. The Glory of Divine Love will beget Self-Reflections upon our Unworthiness: So it did with *David*, when God had promised him many Blessings by *Nathan*. See how he lessens himself, *2 Sam. 7. 18. Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my House, that thou hast brought me hitherto?* Undeserved Love makes an Ingenuous Spirit to take shame to it self for former misbehaviour. When Gods Love to *Ephraim* had turned him to Repentance, and so to Peace, he saw his former Miscarriages were his present Reproach; this ashamed and confounded him, *Jer. 31. 19. Ezek. 16. 63.*

*Thirdly*, A Sense of Gods Love hath a special engaging and exciting Force upon us to *Obedience*. It doth not only oblige us, and make us Debtors, as *Law. 8. 12.* But by a powerful Inclination, it doth most strongly move and incline. Fear of Wrath is a strong Compulsive, and we need it; but Love draws more effectually, because it begets a delight to do the Will of God; and because *Cords of Love are the Bands*  
of

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*of a Man, Hof. 11. 4.* Such obliging  
kindness as best suits a Man of Reason  
and Ingenuity.

*Fourthly*, Sense of Love will mightily  
strengthen and encourage us against all  
*Sufferings*. Love makes every thing  
easie. This was the Strength and Cou-  
rage of all the Worthies mentioned in  
*Heb. 11.* This bore out all the Martyrs  
in all Persecutions.

*Fifthly*, Sense of Love is that which  
gives sweetness to all *Temporal Blessings*.  
Riches, Honour, Peace, if they be not  
given in Love, may be our greatest  
Plagues, and will afford no Satisfaction.  
Divine Love expressed in them  
like the Philosophers Stone, changes  
their Nature, and turns our rejoicing  
in them to a rejoicing in God.

*Sixthly*, Sense of Gods Love leads  
us to a *Delighting in God*. This is  
one of the great Duties recommended  
us, *Psalms 37. 4.* The Particulars of the  
Advice given there, are all founded upon  
the different Dealings of God with  
the Godly and Wicked, the Sum whereof  
of is this: That God hath a peculiar  
loving Regard to Godly Men; as to

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vindicate them, *ver.* 6. To bless their Enjoyments, *ver.* 16. To shelter them against Calamities, *ver.* 19. To direct their steps, *ver.* 23. If God delighteth in his Love to us, we should delight our selves in Love to Him.

The Contemplation of Gods Love will afford us sweet Thoughts. Love in its own Nature is a sweet Subject of Meditation, affording Desire, Delight and Joy; and like a Plentiful Spring of Living Waters which can never be exhausted, it will furnish us with such variety of Matter, that we shall have no occasion to be weary of the Pursuit. Gods Thoughts of Love will still be *Precious*, Psalm 139. 17.

Men can delight themselves in Works of curious Art and Contrivance, in Works of Nature much more: With what delightful Diligence have some Men studied the wonderful Contrivance of the Humane Body, yea even of Worms and Flies? Others fill themselves with Admiration in studying the great Globe of Heaven and Earth, and with Pleasure observe the Perfection of Creatures, as fitted for their Ends and Uses,

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ses, and the subserviency of them for the Beauty and Establishment of the Universe, according to the Appointment of the Glorious and Wise Creator: And why then should not Christians make it their Pleasure to study the Infinite Love of God? This is more especially our Concern, and will be the Delight Work and Joy of Heaven to Eternity.

*Seventhly*, Sense of Gods Love as is the greatest Cordial in all Distresses so it is the greatest Guard against the *Affrightments of Fear*. The Children of God are exercised with Fears frequently, but there are two special Affrightments against which the Apostle advanceth the Triumphant Assurance of the Text.

1. The First great Affrightment that afflicted Christians are distressed with is, That their Tribulations and Distresses are Argument of *Wrath*. Thus they are ready to conclude, If God had loved us, would he have done thus unto us? This is too frequent: Trouble brings Sin to Remembrance; and a trembling Heart fears the worst: Thus Holy *David* discovered his Fear, *Psalms*

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6. 1. *O Lord rebuke me not in thine Anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.*

But a due Consideration of Gods Love will remove this Affrightment, in that none of these things are undoubted Characteristical Marks of Gods Hatred; they are no part of the damning Curse, but an humbling mark set upon us for our Tryal and Exercise, after all the damning Part was removed. Hence the Apostle, *1 Tim. 2. 15.* speaking of the Woman who had a particular mark of Displeasure set upon her, tells us, *She may be saved — notwithstanding her sorrowful Child-bearing.* And in this place, the Apostle takes away this fear, by telling us, *In all such things we are more than Conquerors.*

2. The Second Affrightment is, That these Distresses might tempt us to *turn* off from God and Holiness; and this might separate us from the Love of God. This Affrightment is removed, by the Consideration that our standing is bottomed upon Gods Unchangeable Love. It is possible enough for us and our Graces to fail, if we had not a greater  
Strength



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Strength than our own to bear us.  
So sure is Gods Foundation, that  
will take care for Perseverance.  
great Affrightment, which is too com-  
nary with the Timorous, *Ab I fear*  
*shall fall and miscarry at last,* is  
sweetly answered, *If it was Gods Love*  
that wrought up your Heart to Love  
him, it will keep you, that you shall  
not depart from him.

*Eighthly,* Sense of Gods Love to  
us will be a means to kindle and stir  
*our Love to God.* We Love him, be-  
cause he loved us. Love begets Love.  
If God hath so loved us? Let us en-  
deavour to Love Him.

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F I N I S.